

## Beautiful Stranger

by Grey Bard

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Summary: An uplifting and gloriously dark moment courtesy of the episode "Bug's Life"

## Beautiful Stranger

Beautiful Stranger Author: Grey Bard

> Pairing: JA of course!

> Category: Romance, Song fic<br> Rating: PG-13 for mature ideas

> Spoilers: "Bug's Life"<br> Disclaimer: (to the tune of "We Wish you a Merry Christmas")

> Please, please please please please<br> don't sue me,

> I am aware<br> They're not mine,

> No money was made on this,<br> for I'm not Sci Fi

Oh Mr. Rockne, please forgive me,

> This is done in love for your exquisite show!<br>

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I remember the first time I saw you. You were scared and angry as anything

> and I still thought I was hallucinatng, but the first time our eyes met I<br> felt something. A shock of, I don't know, recognition. Not love at first

> sight, don't get me wrong; I was scared of you, but something else too.<br> Dmned if I know what it was. All I know is that p.o.ed and hot eyed and

> sweaty with adrenaline you were the most beautiful thing I had ever seen.<br> And nothing was ever the same again.

I have never felt this way. Not like this. Not this combination of fear and

> pain and loneliness and respect and sheer animal attraction. There is no one<br> like you, Aeryn. No one else has ever been able to put you out of my mind,

> not even for a minute, I mean microt. Believe me, it's been tried. No one<br> else is ever you, so no one else is ever enough. You're

amazing. Intelligent

> and honorable, vulnerable and oddly gentle, but none of that makes you less<br> dangerous, not even for a moment. There is something feral about your

> wariness, about the way you move like the hunter you are; lithe and smooth<br> like some magnificent savannah predator, deadly but magnetic. That caution

> might have seemed ridiculous back before, paranoid even, but all the rules<br> have changed.

Somehow a little of the attraction comes from the danger. Something in you

> calls to a part of me I'd never even suspected existed. The universe has<br> taken on sharp edges, and suddenly everything matters because of you. You

> woke something up in me. Something old and strong and fiercely greedy for<br> living now that it's tasted a good thing. I think I've snarled more in the

> time I've known you than in all the rest of my life put together.<p>

Do you know what it's like to have always known what you were and what you

> are doing, be good at it and suddenly have it mean next to nothing? Yeah, I<br> guess you do. It's just... I was a grown man at the top of my field with a

> brilliant future ahead of me and now so little I've done, so little I know<br> means anything here!

But it isn't the whole displacement thing that got to me, it was you. Even

> being spacewarped through unknown millions of light years wouldn't have<br> changed me the way you have. This all would have been one big thrill ride on

> the way home, but now Earth isn't home. Not really. Because of you. Because<br> of us. Because there's little joy in kiddie rides after a rollercoaster.

> Because... Aww, frell. Who am I fooling? Because even my pride isn't<br> worth losing you, and Earth is no place for a Sebacean. Not forever.

I've killed because of you, and to be honest, I'm still not sure how to

> deal with that. I don't mean that poor medtech that got in the way of the<br> virus. I mean Larraque and the virus together. I killed a man in cold blood,

> and you know what? I didn't hate it.<p>

In fact, it felt kinda good. Because you know what? When I blew up that

> Marauder ship I wasn't thinking about that medtech the virus had used me to<br> kill, or poor Larraque trapped by the virus just like I had been. Hll, I

> wasn't even thinking about saving the universe from the virus. That all came<br> later. All my mind could see was his knife in your gut and his leering

> smile, and all I knew was that he had to pay. And it felt good.<p>

I'm not a killer, Aeryn. No, that's not true. I wasn't a killer.

Because

> it was my finger on that button. Because if it had to have been it  
would<br> have been my hand on the knife or the trigger. Because I  
would do it again  
> in a heartbeat. And I probably will have to.<p>

And for all my pain and guilt, part of me still exults in it. And  
yeah, I

> look closer at faces now, and I don't like to sit with my back to a  
crowd<br> offship. I never forget to check for exits, I always have a  
lie ready.

Maybe what I'm trying to say is at heart, we're not that much  
different,

> are we, anymore? And we're getting even less so. Belonging to both  
peace and<br> war, locked into what we are by each other. And that  
feral part of me? It

> doesn't mind the idea of a mated pair of hunters, covering each  
other's<br> backs and fending off the world.

It's not safe. It's not sane. It would have seemed totally alien to  
me

> before I met you. But you know what? I kind of like it.<p>

End  
file.